

**USAID LIBERIA
RESULTS REVIEW
MARCH 1996**

I. FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

A. INTRODUCTION

Liberia is emerging from six years of a brutal civil war that devastated the country, resulting in the deaths of more than 150,000 Liberians and destroying virtually all of the nation's infrastructure outside the capital city. The state has failed, and the countryside has remained fragmented, divided into territories controlled by warring factions, for much of the six years of warfare. The conflict has inflicted massive human suffering on the civilian population. The Liberian crisis has generated over 700,000 refugees, most of whom are living in neighboring countries, and over one million persons are displaced within the country. During the past year, USAID assistance has been instrumental in providing emergency relief to reduce the suffering of internally displaced persons and other needy civilians.

In August 1995 a new peace process was launched with the signing of the Abuja agreement and the installation on September 1 of a transitional government featuring a Council of State (a collective chief executive) that includes the conflict's three main warlords plus three civilian representatives. The transitional government is responsible for: (a) disarming and demobilizing the factions; (b) reintegrating, repatriating and resettling ex-combatants, internally displaced persons, and refugee-returnees; and creating the conditions necessary for the conduct of national elections in August of 1996. Over the last twelve months the USAID program has contributed significantly both to the creation of conditions that foster a transition from crisis to recovery and to preparations for implementing the necessary transitional activities.

Major contributions of the USAID program in 1995 included:

- Over 730,000 displaced persons, nutritionally vulnerable groups, and other needy beneficiaries of the PL 480 Title II program implemented by USAID'S cooperating sponsor Catholic Relief Services received food aid that in most cases was their main source of sustenance, often preventing severe hunger or even starvation; another 1,100,000 needy Liberians were provided Title II food aid through the World Food Program.
- More than 68,000 farming households received seeds and tools that enabled them to supplement their food aid supplies by beginning to meet food consumption needs through their own production.
- Forty-two micro-projects, supported by a USAID contribution of over \$800,000, were completed, and an additional 32 are in the

process of implementation, providing assistance to communities for such purposes as rebuilding schools and clinics, constructing displaced-persons shelters, rehabilitating wells, repairing roads, and renovating marketplaces.

- Nearly 1,000 ex-combatants and other war-affected young people received vocational training and trauma counselling.
- A USAID/Liberia grantee, the Carter Center of Emory University (CCEU), played an important role in facilitating the Abuja peace agreement and provided small sub-grants to more than 20 local NGOs to conduct key civil-society building projects, including voter education, media skills training, and human rights awareness; one example of such projects is the grant to Women in Action for Goodwill for airing radio programs in 16 Liberian languages appealing to combatants to disarm, return home, and begin rebuilding their communities.

B. SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS

Food Security: Food production has been severely affected by the war, with annual harvests down by about 80% from prewar levels during most of the crisis. Last year FAO was finally able to carry out a crop assessment which found that, despite all the fighting that hampered cultivation in many of the traditionally most productive farming areas during the first half of the year, farmers were able to harvest about 60,000 metric tons of food crops in 1995. Agriculture will be the key sector in Liberia's transition from civil war to recovery.

Democratization: The warring faction leaders have agreed, and made their agreement explicit in signing the Abuja peace accord, that a democratic national election is to be an integral part of the transition from civil crisis to recovery. The power-sharing governance arrangements incorporated in the current Liberian National Transitional Government, while clearly far from perfect, have at least raised questions about the country's pre-war political processes and systems. Similarly, the virtually total breakdown of authority resulting from the war, even with all its horrors, may offer an opportunity to carry out a political reconstruction process, particularly at the local level, based on the establishment of community participation and self-determination. The war has also exacerbated existing political problems and created new ones, however, and establishing real democracy and good governance will be a major challenge.

Relief-Development Continuum: The six-year civil war has completely dislocated hundred of thousands of Liberians and devastated most of the country outside the capital city of Monrovia. Throughout the crisis the country has remained heavily dependent on disaster relief for reducing the dislocation and other suffering resulting from the conflict. Now that a peace process is underway, the focus of USAID's assistance needs to shift to aiding the transition to rehabilitation, recovery and, ultimately,

sustainable development. Pre-war Liberia was essentially an agrarian society and economy, and rural resettlement and reintegration primarily through investments in community-based, productive-sector micro-projects upcountry are crucial to peace, stability, and recovery. Support for the resettlement and reintegration effort will be the main thrust of USAID/Liberia programs for FY 1997 and the medium term thereafter.

II. PROGRESS TOWARD STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

In this results review it should be noted that, from the beginning of the civil war at the end of 1989 through FY 1994, USAID/Liberia did not have any resources available other than food aid and International Disaster Assistance funding. It was only at the very end of FY 1994 that resources from more mainstream USAID resources, including DFA, became available for Liberia. As a result, since BHR-managed resources have not been subject to API reporting or similar performance measurement processes, and because missions do not have full management authority over BHR programs (in BHR/OFDA's case the field has not been delegated any management authority), neither baseline nor time-series data are available for use in this results review. Similarly, BHR has not provided the mission with any established results frameworks or packages, including objectives, performance indicators, and intermediate targets, for food aid or disaster relief programs in the field. Nor does USAID/Liberia yet have an approved strategic plan. Consequently, this year's results review for USAID/Liberia cannot comply fully with even the transitional guidance for this initial period of the Agency's reengineering process.

TARGET OF OPPORTUNITY 1: SUCCESSFUL DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION INCLUDING FREE AND FAIR NATIONAL ELECTIONS

By the second half of 1994, the peace process established by the Cotonou agreement had already come apart, and it was clear that a new accord would have to be reached if the Liberian civil war were to be ended through peaceful negotiation. Using funds available from its grant from USAID/Liberia, the Carter Center of Emory University (CCEU) worked skillfully behind the scenes to help arrange a series of negotiations, in Akosombo and Accra, Ghana, and in Abuja, Nigeria, involving ECOWAS, the UN, and the warring factions among others, to work out a new formula for the Liberian peace process. The Abuja negotiations in August of 1995 yielded a new peace accord named after that Nigerian city which was the sight of its signing.

In addition to working on the peace negotiations, CCEU through its Monrovia office continued its efforts to assist the establishment of grassroots organizations in civil society, promote conflict resolution and reconciliation within Liberian society, and support preparations for national elections. The CCEU-founded Liberian Network for Peace and Development (LNPD) provided a total of 14 small grants to 13 local groups to carry out activities in civic education, reconciliation and healing, and human rights. The activities benefitted community leaders, women, students, former

combatants and displaced persons. The Carter Center's contribution totalled \$4,200 (\$300 per grant), which accounted for over 30 percent of the total cost of all projects. The Carter Center also sponsored training workshops in human rights monitoring for 25 activists from 13 Liberian organizations and in conflict resolution for 25 prominent Liberian opinion-shapers, many of them highly placed in warring factions.

Shortly after USAID/Liberia gave a grant to the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) at the end of FY 1994 for assisting with elections preparations and conduct, it became clear that national elections called for in the failed Abuja peace process were not likely to take place. As a result, implementation of the IFES grant was suspended. IFES staff in Washington continued to monitor the Liberian and stay in close touch with other organizations concerned with elections and other aspects of democratization in Liberia. In the last quarter of 1995, IFES began to gear up for resuming grant implementation, including the establishment of an office in Monrovia. A team of three IFES experts visited Liberia in February to make preparations for opening that office and to develop a work plan for it. The visit was highly useful, producing a new proposal, which is being quite well received both within Liberia and outside, for a national election to fit the extremely tight time frame and other constraints imposed by the Abuja agreement.

TARGET OF OPPORTUNITY 2: SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION FROM RELIEF TO RECOVERY THROUGH A COMMUNITY REINTEGRATION PROGRAM

Over the course of the crisis some progress toward reestablishment of social stability and resumption of economic activity, at least in petty commerce and the informal sector generally, has occurred in the ECOMOG-secured safe-haven of greater Monrovia. The so-called "general distribution" program for food aid, in which virtually every household in the city is eligible to receive a monthly ration, is being phased out this year. The remaining food aid programs for the capital will "target" on nutritionally vulnerable groups, internally displaced persons, the urban poor, and other especially needy population segments. One important means by which this shift is being accomplished is the removal of rice from the food aid program and the inclusion instead of bulgur wheat, a "self-targeting commodity" in the Liberian context. After rice was replaced by bulgur wheat last year, which was done largely at USAID's instance, the amount of misappropriation of the main staple in the Monrovia food aid program decreased by 23 percent.

Also in Monrovia, two US-based NGOs, Liberia Opportunities Industrialization Centers and the Salesian Missions, are using grants financed by IDA funds to operate vocational schools, in skilled trades, primary health care, and laboratory technician work, for ex-combatants and other young people seriously affected by the civil war. These vocational schools also provide their students trauma counseling to help rehabilitate them and reintegrate them into the post-war society and economy. Other NGOs

and UN agencies are providing essential humanitarian assistance, including basic health and medical services, water and sanitation facilities, and displaced persons shelter support, in Monrovia with IDA-funded grants.

In Buchanan, another safe-haven connected to Monrovia by the ECOMOG security corridor of the highway between the two port cities, some rehabilitation and recovery is beginning to recur, and the "general distribution" food aid program conducted by USAID cooperating sponsor CRS is also being phased out this year as a result. The rate of moderate and severe malnutrition among infants and pre-school children registering at the supplementary and therapeutic feeding centers has remained at about 14 percent, however, and CRS is pursuing expansion and redesign of the targeted food aid programs in the city. Some 20,000 internally displaced persons began leaving the Buchanan shelters late last year, presumably to return to their original homes and begin the process of resettling and reintegrating into their prewar communities.

In other parts of the country, movement toward rehabilitation has been more uneven and sporadic. The NGOs and some UN agencies have been able to implement programs in some places around the country, but they have been confined largely to relief operations. Now that the peace process is underway, the USAID program will expand and concentrate on the resettlement and reintegration effort. That effort will include a significantly increased contribution to a national micro-projects program to fund small-scale, labor-intensive, capital-saving projects that are identified, designed and implemented by communities upcountry. The micro-projects will include, for example, clearing of farm-to-market roads, establishment or rehabilitation of marketplaces, building or repair of schools, and refurbishing of health clinics. The reintegration portfolio will also include a continuation of support for the vocational training program of the Liberia branch of the Opportunities Industrialization Centers, with the possible addition of a grant to the Salesian Missions-Don Bask vocational training operation. Funding is to be channeled through international NGOs and UN agencies, possibly using an umbrella project mechanism in some cases.

UNICEF received two grants from USAID/Liberia at the end of FY 1994 to provide support to war-affected youth and to children and others physically disabled during the conflict. Implementation of grant activities was delayed because in-country security and other conditions were not conducive for most of 1995. Now that the peace process is underway, implementation of both grants has begun in earnest. In the project for Physical Rehabilitation of War Victims, UNICEF expects that in the course of the year two orthopedic workshops will be erected and fully equipped, ten orthopedic technicians will be given short-term training, and ninety community-based rehabilitation personnel will be trained and placed in most of the accessible areas of the country. Regarding the War Affected Youth Support project, UNICEF's four Liberian NGO implementing partners aver that all ten project sites will be

operational by the end of 1996.

III. STATUS OF THE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT

A. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE CHANGES OR REFINEMENTS

Because USAID/Liberia has no approved strategic plan, final agreement on the objectives for the program has yet to be reached. The mission has carried out country program planning processes several times over the past two years, beginning with the visit to Liberia in November 1993 of an inter-Bureau team that produced a document, entitled "Crisis, Transition, and Recovery in Liberia: Planning USAID Responses," laying out a two-year strategy for the country program. Other teams have visited Liberia subsequently to refine the strategy and, most recently, translate it into reengineering concepts and terminology. Because of all the vicissitudes of the conflict, however, it has not been able to complete the planning process and produce a final strategy. USAID/Liberia will try to do so by the fall of 1996, provided progress in the implementation of the peace process permits.

B. SPECIAL CONCERNS

This results review has highlighted the difficulties involved in applying this reengineered reporting process to a one-USDH transition mission. When many of the USAID resources provided to the country are not under the mission's control and the offices controlling those resources do not seem to use the reengineered program management systems, it is extremely difficult for the mission to meet the R2 reporting requirements, and to apply the rest of the reengineered program management system.